

Post Covid-19 Pandemic Experiences and Delinquency Behavior among Secondary School Students in Kakamega East Sub-County

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on delinquent behavior among high school learners in Kakamega East Sub-County, Kenya. The pandemic precipitated significant disruptions, including widespread school closures and increased social isolation, which are hypothesized to have influenced youth behavior. The primary objectives of this research were to assess the prevalence of pandemic-related experiences, examine their effects on delinquent behavior in the post-pandemic context, and evaluate the effectiveness of intervention strategies aimed at addressing these behaviors. An embedded mixed-methods design was employed, utilizing stratified and cluster random sampling techniques to select five schools from a target population of 2,800 students. Quantitative data were gathered through structured questionnaires, while qualitative insights were obtained via in-depth interviews. The quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS, and thematic analysis was applied to the qualitative data. The findings indicate that the pandemic exerted the most pronounced impact on economic dimensions (mean = 3.7736), followed by academic (mean = 3.332), religious (mean = 2.995), and social experiences (mean = 2.757). Notably, delinquent behaviors, including absenteeism, violence, bullying, and substance abuse, were prevalent among the student population. Pearson correlation analysis revealed weak but statistically significant relationships between pandemic experiences and delinquency. Economic experiences exhibited a negative correlation (-0.050 , $p < 0.001$), while academic (0.142 , $p = 0.052$), religious (0.310 , $p < 0.001$), and social (0.306 , $p < 0.001$) experiences demonstrated weak positive correlations. In conclusion, the study underscores that while intervention strategies are currently in place, there is a pressing need for enhanced reinforcement of social skills to mitigate the long-term effects of the pandemic on student behavior.

Key Words: Delinquency, adolescent, secondary students, school, behavior, black book, strategies and interventions.

INTRODUCTION

In December 2019, a novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, emerged in Wuhan, China, triggering a global outbreak of COVID-19 (Xu et al., 2020). Within three months, the virus affected around 114 nations, prompting the World Health Organization (WHO) to declare it a health pandemic on March 11, 2020, when infection cases reached approximately 118,000 and fatalities numbered about 4,291 (Zangrillo et al., 2020). In response, the WHO implemented preventive measures, including social distancing and lockdowns, which significantly disrupted social gatherings, transportation, and economic activities (Zangrillo et al., 2020; Zhu & Niu, 2020; Lu et al., 2021).

To combat the virus's spread, comprehensive measures such as case identification, contact tracing, and strict isolation protocols were enforced, drawing lessons from Wuhan's early experiences (Aylward & Liang, 2020). While necessary, these interventions threatened adolescents' autonomy by disrupting academic and extracurricular activities. Increased domestic violence and parental abuse during lockdowns further isolated youth, many of whom faced grief due to pandemic-related losses. The resulting lifestyle changes likely contributed to rising youth delinquency, exacerbating feelings of isolation and frustration.

Adolescence is a critical transitional stage characterized by identity exploration and social development (Li-fang, 2008). This period is essential for forming friendships and establishing independence, making adolescents particularly vulnerable to external stressors. A study of 584 youths in China found that 40.4% experienced

psychological issues, underscoring the pandemic's adverse effects on mental health (Liang et al., 2020). Similarly, qualitative research in Turkey noted significant lifestyle changes, such as altered eating and sleeping habits, negatively impacting students' psychological and physical well-being (Orrù et al., 2020).

Research indicates that major lifestyle changes during adolescence can significantly affect youth striving for autonomy (Njonge, 2023). These changes have been linked to rising rates of school dropout and delinquency. For instance, India's National Crime Report documented a 75% juvenile crime rate, with 29,084 apprehended in 2019, indicating a troubling increase in delinquency (Chauhan et al., 2022). In the United States, the Office of Juvenile Justice reported over 722,600 cases in 2019 (Huckleberry, 2019). Qualitative research in Indonesia identified internal and family-related factors as significant contributors to delinquent behavior (Khotimah et al., 2021), while a study in Poland revealed a concerning prevalence of aggressive behaviors among youth (Empirical et al., 2020).

Environmental factors, such as school dropout rates, further exacerbate delinquency issues. Studies in Nigeria, South Africa, and Kenya reported dropout rates of 5% to 10%, with South Africa experiencing significant increases among the poorest households. In Nigeria, school enrollment dropped from 90% in 2019 to 82% in 2020, highlighting the pandemic's educational impact (Moscoviz & Evans, 2022). Delinquency encompasses a range of unacceptable behaviors, including violence and property destruction, often influenced by peer dynamics and media exposure (Acharya & Delhi, 2017).

The pandemic's restrictions, including school closures and curfews, compounded challenges for adolescents, leading to social, economic, and emotional issues. Trauma associated with loss and bereavement, particularly during funerals, further complicated their psychological well-being (Das et al., 2021). UNESCO highlighted that the pandemic caused unprecedented disruptions to education, threatening students' right to schooling (Onyema, 2020). Studies indicate that happiness and life satisfaction are critical to emotional well-being, with unmet basic needs exacerbating suffering (Brajša-Žganec et al., 2018). In Kenya, the shift to online learning during the pandemic deepened educational inequalities, leaving vulnerable students feeling excluded and contributing to issues like drug addiction and early marriages (Ng'ang'a, 2021).

In summary, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted adolescent behavior, leading to increased delinquency rates globally. The interplay of psychological stressors, social isolation, and educational disruptions highlights the urgent need for targeted interventions to support youth in navigating these challenges and fostering positive behaviors in the post-pandemic era.

METHODS

The study used an embedded mixed method design, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data to support the primary study. The fundamental goal of the qualitative component was to provide an in-depth understanding of the expressed experiences. The target population comprised 2,800 students and 5 discipline masters; however, 187 students and 5 discipline masters participated in the study. These discipline masters were involved in managing student misbehaviors, which were recorded in the black book. The sample size was determined using random sampling and purposive sampling techniques. The researcher employed both questionnaires and interview guides to collect data, ensuring that the instruments were rigorously validated through expert reviews and pilot testing to enhance their relevance and clarity. Reliability was established using the test-retest method, yielding a Cronbach alpha of 0.89, indicating high consistency in responses. Data collected were analyzed in light of the research objectives. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequency tables, standard deviations, and Pearson correlations, while qualitative data were presented in narrative form, organized by thematic research objectives. Efforts were made to clearly explain the research process and ensure respondents understood their participation, with assurances of strict confidentiality regarding their responses. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 25 for descriptive statistics and inferential analyses.

RESULTS

Sample Characteristics

The sample for this study comprised 187 high school students from Kakamega East Sub-County, selected

through stratified and cluster random sampling methods across five schools. A significant portion of the participants (66.8%) were aged between 16 and 18 years, while 33.2% were between 19 and 21 years. Gender distribution was skewed toward females (60%) compared to males (40%). In terms of religious affiliation, the vast majority (99%) identified as Christian, with a small minority (1%) identifying as Muslim. These demographics are crucial in understanding the varied experiences of students during the Covid-19 pandemic, which led to disruptions such as school closures, lockdowns, and social distancing measures. The findings explore how these experiences influenced delinquent behaviors like absenteeism, violence, and substance abuse, underscoring the pandemic's impact on youth in this region.

Covid-19 Pandemic Experiences in Students

The findings derived from a survey of 187 secondary school students in Kakamega East Sub-County illuminate the diverse experiences related to the Covid-19 pandemic across four distinct domains: economic, academic, religious, and social. The economic domain emerged as the most significantly affected, with participants reporting a mean score of 3.77 (SD = 0.90). This indicates that the economic repercussions of the pandemic were particularly pronounced among the surveyed students.

In terms of academic experiences, a mean score of 3.33 (SD = 0.88) was recorded, reflecting the substantial disruptions to education that ensued, including school closures and alterations in pedagogical approaches. Religious experiences were reported to be less impactful, with a mean score of 2.95 (SD = 1.24), suggesting a moderate effect on students' religious practices or affiliations during the pandemic. Conversely, social experiences were identified as the least affected, with a mean score of 2.76 (SD = 1.06) as shown in table 1, indicating that while the pandemic did influence students' social interactions, this impact was less pronounced compared to the economic and academic domains.

Table 1: Prevalence of Covid 19 pandemic experiences on secondary school students selected from schools in Kakamega East secondary schools

COVID-19 Experiences	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Economic experiences	187	1.00	5.00	3.7736	0.90027
Academic experiences	187	1.00	5.00	3.3302	0.88193
Religious experiences	187	1.00	5.00	2.9492	1.24384
Social experiences	187	1.00	5.00	2.7594	1.05679
Valid N (list wise)	187				

The data reveals that the Covid-19 pandemic exerted a profound impact on the economic experiences of students, reflected in a high mean score of 3.77. This suggests that many students and their families likely encountered significant financial challenges during this period, including job losses, diminished household income, and increased economic strain resulting from lockdowns and restrictions. Such economic disruptions may have hindered students' ability to meet basic needs, including essential educational expenses, thereby escalating overall economic stress. Academic experiences were also markedly affected, evidenced by a mean score of 3.33. This score reflects the substantial disruptions to traditional schooling that occurred due to the pandemic, including school closures, transitions to remote learning, and difficulties in accessing educational resources. The slightly lower score in this domain compared to economic experiences may indicate that while students faced notable academic challenges, the economic hardships they encountered could have exacerbated these effects by limiting access to vital learning materials and technologies necessary for effective virtual education.

Religious experiences, indicated by a mean score of 2.95, were moderately impacted. This suggests that students' participation in religious gatherings and practices, such as attending church or mosque, was disrupted, albeit perhaps not as severely as other facets of their lives. Given the predominance of Christianity in the region, this

disruption may be attributed to the closure of places of worship and restrictions on religious activities, which could have affected students' spiritual engagement and sense of community. Social experiences, represented by the lowest mean score of 2.76, were impacted to a lesser degree compared to the other domains. This may indicate that while students experienced some social isolation due to restrictions on movement and gatherings, they likely found alternative means to maintain connections with peers, particularly through digital communication platforms. Nevertheless, the relatively low score highlights a reduction in face-to-face interactions, which may have implications for students' social development and overall well-being.

In summary, the pandemic appears to have had the most significant influence on students' economic and academic experiences, while religious and social dimensions were impacted to a moderate extent. This underscores the broad and multifaceted effects of the pandemic on various aspects of students' lives, revealing that certain domains are more susceptible to disruption than others.

Correlation of Pandemic Impacts and Delinquency Levels

Pearson correlations as shown in table 2, among various aspects impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and the levels of delinquency among secondary school students in Kakamega East Sub-County following the resumption of studies. The correlation analysis reveals that social experiences are positively correlated with academic experiences ($r = 0.486, p < 0.001$), religious experiences ($r = 0.460, p < 0.001$), economic experiences ($r = 0.222, p = 0.002$), and delinquency levels ($r = 0.306, p < 0.001$). These findings suggest that students' social experiences during the pandemic are significantly associated with their academic, religious, and economic experiences, as well as with their levels of delinquency.

Academic experiences similarly demonstrate positive correlations with social experiences ($r = 0.486, p < 0.001$), religious experiences ($r = 0.520, p < 0.001$), and economic experiences ($r = 0.332, p < 0.001$). A weak positive correlation is observed between academic experiences and delinquency levels ($r = 0.142, p = 0.052$), indicating a potential association; however, this relationship does not achieve statistical significance at the 0.01 level. Religious experiences are positively correlated with social experiences ($r = 0.460, p < 0.001$), academic experiences ($r = 0.520, p < 0.001$), and economic experiences ($r = 0.260, p < 0.001$). Additionally, there is a positive correlation between religious experiences and delinquency levels ($r = 0.310, p < 0.001$), suggesting that students' religious practices during the pandemic are related to their delinquent behaviors.

Economic experiences exhibit positive correlations with social experiences ($r = 0.222, p = 0.002$), academic experiences ($r = 0.332, p < 0.001$), and religious experiences ($r = 0.260, p < 0.001$). However, economic experiences do not show a significant correlation with delinquency levels ($r = -0.050, p = 0.496$), indicating that the economic impacts of the pandemic may not have a direct association with delinquent behavior in this sample. Finally, delinquency levels are positively correlated with social experiences ($r = 0.306, p < 0.001$) and religious experiences ($r = 0.310, p < 0.001$). The correlation with academic experiences remains weakly positive ($r = 0.142, p = 0.052$) and is not statistically significant. Notably, there is no significant correlation between delinquency levels and economic experiences ($r = -0.050, p = 0.496$).

Table 2: Correlation between different aspects affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic on secondary school students within Kakamega East Sub-County after the resumption of studies

		Social experiences	Academic experiences	Religious experiences	Economic experiences	Delinquency levels
Social experiences	Pearson Correlation	1	0.486**	0.460**	0.222**	0.306**
Social experiences	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.002	0.000
	N	187	187	187	187	187
Academic experiences	Pearson Correlation	0.486**	1	0.520**	0.332**	0.142

Academic experiences	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.052
	N	187	187	187	187	187
Religious experiences	Pearson Correlation	0.460**	0.520**	1.0	0.260**	0.310**
Religious experiences	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000
	N	187	187	187	187	187
Economic experiences	Pearson Correlation	0.222**	0.332**	0.260**	1.0	-0.050
Economic experiences	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.002	0.000	0.000		0.496
	N	187	187	187	187	187
Delinquency levels	Pearson Correlation	0.306**	0.142	0.310**	-0.050	1.0
Delinquency levels	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.052	0.000	0.496	
	N	187	187	187	187	187

The Pearson correlation analysis, as presented in Table 2, highlights several significant relationships among various aspects affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the levels of delinquency among secondary school students in Kakamega East Sub-County. Social experiences during the pandemic show a strong positive correlation with academic experiences ($r = 0.486$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that students' social interactions and support systems are closely linked to their academic performance. Additionally, social experiences are positively correlated with religious experiences ($r = 0.460$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that students who engaged more in religious activities also experienced positive social interactions. There is also a positive correlation between social experiences and economic experiences ($r = 0.222$, $p = 0.002$), as well as between social experiences and delinquency levels ($r = 0.306$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that students with more positive social experiences tend to have more favorable academic, religious, and economic experiences, but also higher levels of delinquent behavior.

Academic experiences are positively correlated with social experiences ($r = 0.486$, $p < 0.001$), religious experiences ($r = 0.520$, $p < 0.001$), and economic experiences ($r = 0.332$, $p < 0.001$), demonstrating that students' academic performance is interrelated with their social, religious, and economic contexts. However, the correlation between academic experiences and delinquency levels is weak ($r = 0.142$, $p = 0.052$) and does not reach statistical significance, suggesting a less direct link between academic performance and delinquent behavior. Religious experiences show significant positive correlations with social experiences ($r = 0.460$, $p < 0.001$), academic experiences ($r = 0.520$, $p < 0.001$), and economic experiences ($r = 0.260$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that religious engagement is associated with positive outcomes across these domains. Notably, religious experiences also have a positive correlation with delinquency levels ($r = 0.310$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that increased religious engagement might be linked to higher levels of delinquency. Economic experiences correlate positively with social ($r = 0.222$, $p = 0.002$), academic ($r = 0.332$, $p < 0.001$), and religious experiences ($r = 0.260$, $p < 0.001$), but show no significant correlation with delinquency levels ($r = -0.050$, $p = 0.496$). This indicates that while economic challenges during the pandemic are associated with other areas of students' lives, they do not have a direct effect on delinquent behavior.

DISCUSSION

Economic Experiences During Covid-19

The economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has been profound and multifaceted, affecting individuals and communities worldwide. Research by Baker et al. (2020) highlights that the pandemic led to a significant decline

in consumer spending, as economic uncertainties compelled many individuals to curtail their expenditures. This decline was particularly pronounced among lower-income households, where financial stress was most acutely felt. Chetty et al. (2020) corroborated these findings, reporting that job losses and reduced income severely impacted household finances, leading to increased economic hardship. The work of Gonzalez and Brown (2020) further emphasizes that the pandemic exacerbated pre-existing economic vulnerabilities, with many individuals facing unprecedented financial instability.

In the context of Kakamega East Sub-County, students experienced significant economic challenges that align with these global findings. The economic strain observed among students is reflected in their difficulties in meeting basic needs and diminished financial stability, which mirrors broader trends reported in other regions. This economic precariousness not only affects students' immediate financial circumstances but also has long-term implications for their educational engagement and mental health. The intersection of economic hardship and educational outcomes is particularly concerning, as financial instability can lead to decreased academic performance and increased dropout rates, creating a cycle of disadvantage that is difficult to escape.

Social Experiences During Covid-19

The social dimensions of the pandemic have similarly undergone drastic changes, fundamentally altering how individuals interact and connect within their communities. Czeisler et al. (2020) documented a significant rise in social isolation, as lockdowns and physical distancing measures disrupted traditional social interactions and community connections. Lo et al. (2020) found that many individuals experienced reduced social support and increased feelings of loneliness due to restricted social engagements, which can have detrimental effects on mental health. Xie et al. (2021) further emphasized that these disruptions significantly impacted mental well-being, leading to heightened social anxiety and stress.

Findings regarding social experiences among students in Kakamega East Sub-County reflect this global pattern of increased social isolation. The notable disruptions in social interactions and community support experienced by students underscore the widespread impact of these changes, consistent with observations across various regions. The implications of social isolation are particularly severe for adolescents, who rely heavily on peer interactions for emotional support and identity formation. The erosion of these social networks during the pandemic may lead to long-term consequences for students' social development and psychological resilience.

Academic Experiences During Covid-19

The transition to remote learning during the Covid-19 pandemic has introduced both opportunities and challenges for students worldwide. Andrews and Hedges (2020) documented the difficulties associated with online learning, including issues related to technology access and student engagement. Arora and Srinivasan (2020) highlighted that the shift to virtual classrooms exacerbated existing educational inequalities, with many students struggling to adapt to new learning environments. Kuhfeld et al. (2020) observed significant setbacks in academic progress due to the disruption of traditional educational practices.

These challenges are mirrored in the experiences reported by students in Kakamega East Sub-County, where substantial disruptions to academic routines were evident. The difficulties faced by these students, such as challenges with remote learning and interruptions in educational continuity, are consistent with those experienced globally during the pandemic. The academic setbacks observed are not merely temporary; they may have lasting consequences on students' educational trajectories, particularly for those already at risk of falling behind. The need for targeted interventions to support students in recovering lost learning is critical, as the pandemic has highlighted and intensified existing educational disparities.

Religious Experiences During Covid-19

The pandemic has also profoundly affected religious practices and community engagement. Jabs et al. (2020) reported a significant shift toward virtual religious services as in-person gatherings were curtailed. Koenig et al. (2020) observed a decline in physical attendance at religious services, with many individuals turning to online platforms for spiritual support. Lo et al. (2020) noted that the disruption of religious practices affected

community cohesion and individual psychological well-being.

In Kakamega East Sub-County, students reported similar disruptions in their religious practices, reflecting a broader trend observed during the pandemic. The shift from traditional to virtual religious activities highlights a significant change in spiritual engagement, aligning with the global impact on religious practices during this period. The implications of these changes are multifaceted; while some individuals may find solace in virtual engagement, others may experience a sense of disconnection from their faith communities. This disconnection can exacerbate feelings of isolation and anxiety, further complicating the mental health landscape for students navigating the challenges of the pandemic.

Changes in Delinquency During Covid-19

The impact of Covid-19 on delinquency has varied across different regions, reflecting the complex interplay of socio-economic factors. DeAngelis (2020) found that economic stress and increased social isolation contributed to heightened delinquent behavior in some areas. Conversely, Peterman et al. (2020) reported that lockdown measures and reduced opportunities for delinquent activities led to a decrease in certain types of crime. Gunnell et al. (2020) highlighted that variations in delinquency rates were influenced by local pandemic responses and socio-economic conditions.

The findings regarding delinquent behavior among students in Kakamega East Sub-County indicate an increase in such behavior, aligning with the trend of heightened delinquency observed in regions facing significant stress and disruption. This increase reflects the broader impact of pandemic-related stressors on youth behavior. The relationship between economic hardship, social isolation, and increased delinquency underscores the urgent need for community-based interventions that address the root causes of these behaviors. By providing support and resources to at-risk youth, communities can mitigate the negative impacts of the pandemic and foster healthier developmental trajectories.

Correlation Between Covid-19 Experiences and Delinquency

The relationship between Covid-19 experiences and delinquency has been a significant focus of research, revealing important insights into the factors influencing youth behavior during this turbulent period. Elgar et al. (2020) found that economic hardship and social isolation during the pandemic were positively correlated with increased delinquent behavior. Xie et al. (2021) observed that disruptions to daily routines and heightened stress levels were linked to higher rates of delinquency. Similarly, Gunnell et al. (2020) noted that the pandemic's impact on social and economic conditions was closely associated with changes in delinquent behavior.

The significant correlations between various pandemic experiences and delinquency among students in Kakamega East Sub-County align with these global patterns. These correlations highlight how pandemic-related stressors influence youth behavior, underscoring the importance of understanding these dynamics to formulate effective interventions. Addressing the underlying economic and social factors contributing to delinquency is crucial for promoting positive outcomes for students and fostering resilient communities in the aftermath of the pandemic.

Implications

The Covid-19 pandemic has exposed critical vulnerabilities within educational, economic, and social systems, necessitating a comprehensive understanding of its multifaceted impacts. The implications of these findings are profound, particularly for students in regions like Kakamega East Sub-County, where the economic strain has been particularly acute. Many students have faced significant challenges in meeting basic needs, which has not only affected their immediate financial stability but also their educational engagement and mental health. This economic precariousness highlights the urgent need for integrated support systems that address both immediate challenges and long-term educational outcomes.

Moreover, the heightened social isolation experienced during the pandemic has underscored the importance of community and peer support. Students have reported feelings of loneliness and anxiety, which can have lasting

effects on their psychological well-being. The disruption to traditional educational practices has revealed significant gaps in technology access and educational equity. Many students have struggled to adapt to remote learning due to inadequate resources, which further exacerbates existing inequalities. The implications of these findings extend beyond the immediate context of the pandemic, suggesting that systemic changes are necessary to foster resilience in the face of future crises.

Policy Implications and Recommendations

In light of these implications, there is a pressing need for policymakers and educational leaders to reevaluate existing policies and practices to better support students and communities. One of the most critical policy implications is the necessity for enhanced financial support for students, particularly those from low-income households. Governments and educational institutions should implement targeted financial assistance programs, such as scholarships, grants, and emergency funds, to alleviate economic pressures. This financial support is essential not only for immediate relief but also for ensuring that students can continue their education without the burden of financial instability.

Additionally, the pandemic has highlighted the urgent need for mental health resources within educational institutions. As students navigate the psychological impacts of isolation and uncertainty, increased investment in mental health services is crucial. Schools should provide accessible counseling and support services to help students cope with the emotional challenges they face. Creating a culture that prioritizes mental well-being will be vital in fostering resilience among students.

Another significant policy implication is the need for equitable access to technology and internet resources. The shift to remote learning has underscored the disparities in technology access, which disproportionately affect students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Policymakers must prioritize initiatives that ensure all students can engage effectively in online learning. This could involve partnerships with technology companies to provide devices and connectivity solutions for underserved populations, thereby leveling the playing field for all students. Community engagement programs also play a vital role in addressing the social isolation experienced during the pandemic. Initiatives that foster community resilience and support networks can help mitigate the effects of isolation and promote collective well-being. By encouraging collaboration among community members, schools, and local organizations, these programs can create a supportive environment that empowers students and families.

Finally, educational policies should embrace flexible learning models that accommodate various learning styles and circumstances. The pandemic has demonstrated that a one-size-fits-all approach to education is inadequate. By offering hybrid and flexible learning options, educators can ensure that all students have the opportunity to succeed, regardless of their individual situations.

Long-term Effects and Future Research

The long-term effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on students and educational systems are likely to be profound and multifaceted. One of the primary concerns is the potential for significant academic achievement gaps, particularly for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The disruptions in learning may lead to long-lasting disparities in educational attainment. Longitudinal studies will be essential to track these gaps and identify effective remediation strategies to support students in catching up.

In addition to academic concerns, the psychological impact of the pandemic may have lasting effects on students' mental health. Future research should focus on understanding these impacts and developing interventions to support mental well-being. As students continue to navigate the aftermath of the pandemic, it will be crucial to monitor their mental health and provide the necessary resources to promote resilience. The social development of students is another area of concern. The social isolation experienced during the pandemic may hinder the development of essential social skills among adolescents. Investigating the long-term effects on interpersonal relationships and social behavior will be crucial in understanding how these experiences shape students' futures.

Finally, research should evaluate the effectiveness of implemented policies and programs designed to address

the challenges posed by the pandemic. Understanding what strategies have been successful and which have fallen short will be instrumental in informing future responses to similar crises. By focusing on these implications, policymakers and educators can work towards building more resilient educational systems that can withstand future challenges, ultimately ensuring that all students have the opportunity to thrive in an ever-changing world.

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